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## Road

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*Dordt College*

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## The Road

by John Van Rys

Hooves electric on asphalt—  
dawn's three deer  
on interstate 69.

o i know  
it's a cliché—deer at dawn  
like beer and football and boobs  
like barbie and ken, copyright  
Mattel Inc., and as American—  
spare me.

White tails proliferate parks, farms,  
big screens and beds—bambi,  
a child's voice in deer's clothing, stuffed,  
machine washable.

o i know:  
the native way of life—arrows  
in the throat, buckskin, bone tools:  
Daniel Boone, hunting season's  
genesis, boys become men  
and deer cling to swerving hoods:  
biologists cull herds  
to enact the law  
of negative population growth.

But alive  
three deer were throbbing  
capillaries, tightened sinews, vaulting  
muscles—their leaping flesh  
liquid loops of flowing umber,  
orange-brown in dawn light, fire  
from earth to air and back to dust.



## Inside Out

by John Van Dyke

Where in the world does one locate a soul?  
bedroom, bedroom, in back alley—church pew  
perhaps? Can one compare them—many, few,  
enough? Is each buried deep, a blind model?  
What is it? animal, vegetable, mineral?  
body-lined spirit? or shadow? A clue  
means from heaven, please. Does it rise like dew  
at dawn, quenching, or burn the tongue a scald?

yes! the fence made,  
it quivers and shrinks  
beneath them!

This dawn no 18 wheels  
nor penetrating shell  
nor fractured bone slows  
the flow.

900 miles later—38 thumped and bloody  
coons, 12 lingering and degutted skunks  
and 1 grounded eagle—pulp  
but for three feathers  
fanned to mute protest  
by metal breezes  
disturbing crows—  
three deer still (charged  
with trespassing)  
vault my fences.

o i know!  
my heart pants for them  
as a charged cloud longs  
for the unsplintered branch.